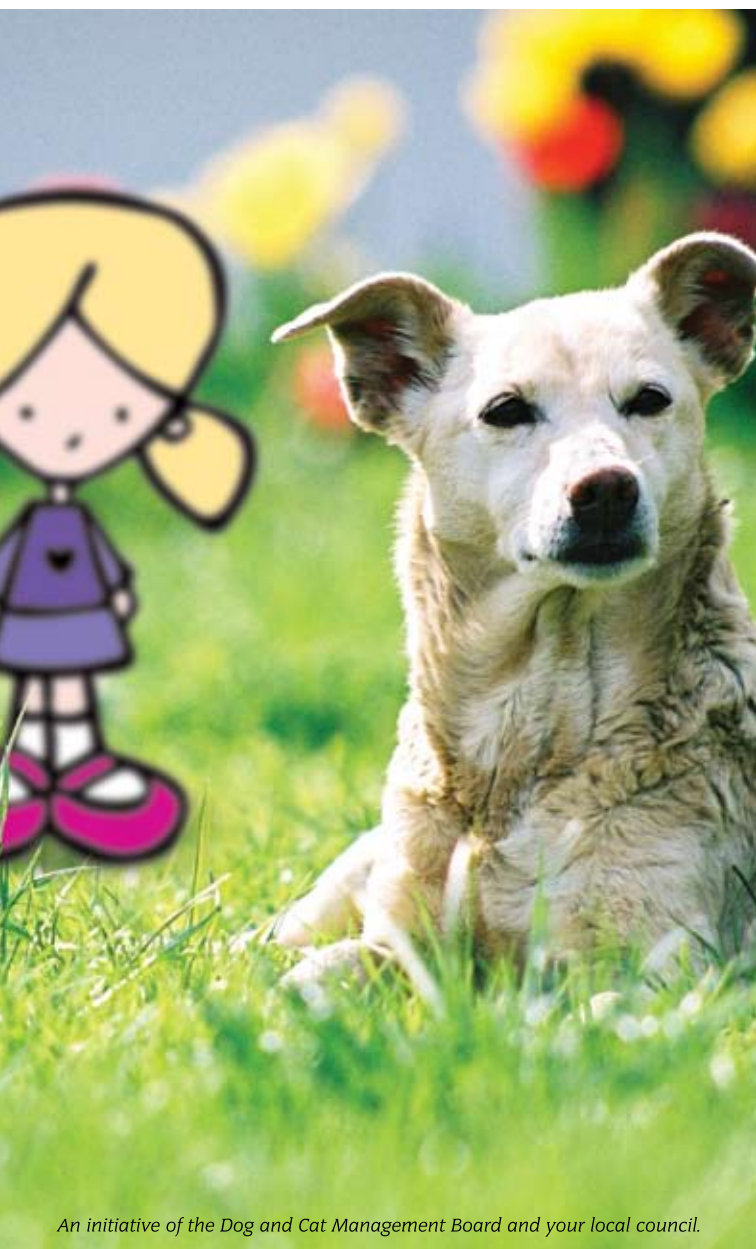


# Dogs and the law.



*An initiative of the Dog and Cat Management Board and your local council.*

**GOODDOG**  **SA.com**

**Each year, dogs  
bite more than  
100,000 Australians.  
Be a responsible  
dog owner.**

## Good Dogs

**A well-mannered dog is a joy to be around and a source of great pride to its owner.**

Good dog owners are responsible for their pets and to the community. A well-loved, trained dog is unlikely to annoy anyone. Unfortunately, dogs that cause problems are often neglected, untrained or not properly socialised. Some rules and good management will ensure that dogs and people will live in harmony.

The laws relating to dogs are contained in the *Dog and Cat Management Act 1995*. Visit **GoodDogSA.com** to download a copy of this Act.

### LOST OR SEIZED DOGS

A council appointed Animal Management Officer (AMO) may seize and detain a dog if it is wandering at large, has attacked another person or animal, is unduly dangerous or if the AMO believes it is necessary to ensure public safety.

The seized dog may either be returned to the owner or held at the local council's dog pound. The council will try to reunite the dog with its owner as soon as possible, as long as public safety is not compromised.

**It is crucial that your dog is registered and microchipped so that it is easily traceable if it becomes lost. If you lose your dog contact your local Council ASAP.**

Lost dogs can be easily reunited with their owners when implanted with a microchip. A microchip is about the size of a grain of rice and it does not cause pain or discomfort to the dog. Once the dog is microchipped, it will be permanently identified and the details will be recorded for the life of the dog in an accredited national database. Owners of microchipped dogs receive a certificate and a special identification tag which can be attached to their dog collars.

# Bad Owners & Bad Dogs

## The local council enforces the law.

You have the right to use public land without fear of being attacked or harassed by a dog. Any dog attack on a person or animal should be reported to the local council. The council will investigate the attack and advise you on the next steps.

If you have been attacked, you should seek legal advice as you may be entitled to claim damages and costs incurred as a result of the attack.

Encouraging a dog to attack, harass or chase another person, animal or bird is a serious offence.

### **WHEN SHOULD YOU REPORT IT?**

You should report the attack as soon as possible. Try and remember the details so that the local council will have more information for the investigation.

### **WHAT IS YOUR LEGAL POSITION?**

If the local council deems it appropriate, charges will be laid against the person responsible for the dog.

### **WHO IS LEGALLY RESPONSIBLE FOR A DOG?**

Responsibility rests on either the owner of the dog or the person in control of the dog at the time. For example, if you are caring for somebody else's dog when it attacks another person or dog, you may be held liable for related damages.

### **WHO ENFORCES THE LAWS RELATING TO DOGS?**

Local council appointed Animal Management Officers (AMO) handle all matters relating to dogs. The AMO must carry and produce an identification card if requested.

AMOs have the power to:

- require a person to produce a dog, or any certificates or records issued under the *Dog and Cat Management Act 1995*, for inspection

- require a person they suspect has committed or appears to be about to commit an offence to give their full name and address and produce identification
- seize and detain dogs under certain circumstances.

AMOs may also enter and inspect any place or vehicle, on suspicion of an offence, and a warrant may be obtained if the owner denies permission.

It is an offence to hinder, obstruct, abuse or refuse to comply with a reasonable request of an AMO. AMOs may also cross council boundaries to carry out various duties under certain circumstances.

## **PENALTIES**

If a complaint is proven to be valid, the council may levy an expiation fee. If the offence is serious, the person responsible for the dog might be summoned to appear in court.

## **CONTROL ORDERS**

The local council can issue Control Orders for Barking, Nuisance, Menacing or Dangerous dogs. In each instance, the council has to undergo a strict process to establish the circumstances that allow a Control Order to be placed on a dog. For very serious cases, the council can impose a Destruction Order on a dog.

These orders may give directions on how the owner is to comply with the order. Compliance with these directions is compulsory as per the *Dog and Cat Management Act 1995*.

The local council must also give seven days written notice of the Control Order and must allow the owner the opportunity to contest the Control Order. If the matter cannot be resolved through consultation, the owner may appeal to the Courts to have the order revoked, or amended.

A dog's place in today's society is almost as important as that of a family member so it is critical that dog owners teach their dogs what they need to know to get along with people. Good behaviour in a dog is not just an accident or a natural occurrence. Good dogs are the result of care, love, good breeding and good training.

**Visit [GoodDogSA.com](http://GoodDogSA.com) to find out how you can become a responsible dog owner.**

**Two out of three dog bites happen "in the backyard".  
Supervise children with dogs.**

**Dog bites can occur when dogs are wandering at large.  
Never pat a dog you do not know.**

**Almost 50% of all serious dog bites occur in children under 10 years of age.  
Never disturb a dog when it is asleep or eating.**

**Two out of three dog bites involve the family, neighbour or friend's pet dog.  
Teach your dog how to behave with visitors.**

**Dog bites occur when dogs have not been taught how to act around dogs and people.  
Socialise your dog.**